

**The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
National Nonprofit Organization Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Grant
Program**

All entities wishing to do business with the federal government must have a unique entity identifier (UEI). The UEI number is issued by the System for Award Management (SAM) system.

UEI Updates in Grant Application Forms:

On April 4, 2022, the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number was replaced by a new, non-proprietary identifier requested in, and assigned by, SAM.gov. This new identifier is the UEI. Entities that had a DUNS Number were automatically assigned a UEI. New entities needing a UEI must register in SAM.gov at: <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

Additional Information can be found on Grants.gov:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/planned-uei-updates.html>

Grants.gov registration information can be found at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

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A. Program Description

1. Issued By

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), United States Coast Guard (USCG),
Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety, Boating Safety Division

2. Assistance Listing Number

97.012

3. Assistance Listing Title

Boating Safety Financial Assistance

4. Funding Opportunity Title

National Nonprofit Organization Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Grant Program

5. Funding Opportunity Number

DHS-USCG-NONPROFIT-2024

6. Authorizing Authority for Program

46 U.S.C. §§ 13101-13110

7. Appropriation Authority for Program

Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act, Chp. 658, § 4, 64 Stat. 432, as amended (classified to 16 U.S.C. § 777c); Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982, Pub. L. No. 97-424, § 531(a), 96 Stat. 2187-2191 (1983), as amended (classified to 26 U.S.C. § 9503)

8. Announcement Type

Initial

9. Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

a. Overview

The mission of the National RBS Program is to ensure the public has a safe, secure, and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs designed to minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts.

b. Objectives

The strategic plan of the National RBS Program has three initiatives designed to prevent deaths and injuries of recreational boaters. They are:

- 1) **Initiative 1:** Positively Influence Recreational Boater Behavior
- 2) **Initiative 2:** Positively Influence Recreational Boat and Accessory Manufacturers
- 3) **Initiative 3:** Leverage Recreational Boating Data

c. Priorities

The Boating Safety Division will facilitate the execution of the three initiatives via the courses of action (CoA) and activities listed in the strategic plan.

Nonprofits may review the CoAs and activities to understand the intent of each initiative, but ***applicants are not required to cite and/or specifically address an individual CoA or activity.***

Nonprofits should use the framework of the strategic plan to contextualize the overall goals of the National RBS Program but **are encouraged to apply for any project that fits one or more of the three initiatives.**

The strategic plan can be found online at: [RBS Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#).

10. Performance Measures

In compliance with DHS and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, the USCG established program-wide performance measures to be tracked annually. Successful applicants will be required to report on the following measures:

- 1) Media impressions generated by boating safety outreach grants
- 2) Nationwide life jacket wear rate
- 3) Number of attendees at grant-funded boating safety conferences
- 4) Number of boating engineering standards improved through grant funding
- 5) Number of life jackets utilized at grant-funded life jacket loaner stations
- 6) Number of students and instructors produced from grant-funded boating law enforcement courses

11. Important Information for the FY 2024 Competition

- a. The USCG has updated its NOFO in compliance with the FY24 DHS NOFO Template. While the overall structure remains the same, it now has a table of contents and some subsections have been updated or reorganized.
- b. Due to the amount of funding available for new awards, the USCG will be enforcing the following competition parameters:

- 1) Applicants must apply for a **15-month** period of performance.
 - 2) Organizations can submit a **maximum of four** applications.
 - 3) The maximum budget request **per application** cannot exceed \$250,000.
- c. Appendix B. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions** has been updated.
- d. Please strictly follow the file labeling instructions in Section D. 10. e. Grants.gov PDF Submission Instructions.**

B. Federal Award Information

1. Available Funding for the NOFO

\$1,439,948.00

2. Maximum Award Amount

Applicants **may not** request more than \$250,000 **per application**. **Applications that exceed \$250,000 will not be reviewed.**

3. Period of Performance

15 months

4. Projected Period of Performance Start Date

07/01/2024

5. Projected Period of Performance End Date

09/30/2025

6. Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

A cooperative agreement is distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the federal awarding agency and the non-federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the federal award. The USCG will work closely with recipients throughout the duration of the award to ensure that approved activities are conducted in accordance with program statute and federal regulations, requested costs are allowable and allocable, and deliverables are developed or enhanced with direct input and review by USCG staff. The USCG and recipient will also develop definitions of substantial involvement tailored to the awarded activities that will be defined in the recipient's Coast Guard Terms & Conditions.

The USCG can halt an activity immediately if the detailed performance specifications or requirements, as determined by the agreed upon terms and conditions of the award agreement, are not met. The USCG may require the review and approval of proposed tasks, activities, and deliverables prior to the recipient's implementation or dissemination.

The USCG staff also play a direct role in the post-award negotiation process. Please see **Section. F. 2. Grant Award Negotiations** for more information.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit with 501(c)(3) IRS Status (Other than Institutions of Higher Education)

2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

46 U.S.C. § 13104 authorizes federal financial assistance for "national boating safety activities of national nonprofit public service organizations." The USCG has developed the following eligibility criteria based on federal law and regulations, legal rulings and interpretations, and guidance from other federal agencies.

- a. Applicants must be a nongovernmental organization.
- b. Applicants must be designated as a nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3).
- c. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to provide RBS services via one of the three definitions of national-in-scope. The USCG defines national-in-scope as:
 - 1) the ability to provide RBS services in all regions per **Appendix A: Grant Regional Map**
 - 2) is currently providing recreational boating services in all regions
 - 3) proposes a specific plan and timeline to partner and/or contract with other national, state, and/or local organizations across all regions to provide RBS services.
- d. Applicants must demonstrate that one of their primary functions is to provide services to the public.

3. Other Eligibility Criteria or Restrictions

a. Additional Eligibility Information

- 1) Applicants are required to submit a copy of their letter from the IRS specifying the organization's status. Please see **Section 9.d. Other Required Documents** for more information.

- 2) Organizations do not need to be boating related.
- 3) A national membership base does not suffice.
- 4) Nonprofit organizations that are associated with profit-making or taxable organizations are eligible for grants if they meet all the eligibility requirements.

b. Ineligible Organizations

The following organizations are ineligible for funding:

- 1) colleges and universities
- 2) hospitals
- 3) governments or governmental organizations (including city, county, state, etc.)
- 4) churches
- 5) municipalities
- 6) local units of national organizations
- 7) fraternal, lobbying, or religious organizations
- 8) organizations that are unable operate on a national level.

c. Contracting with Ineligible Organizations

Eligible applicants may contract with ineligible organizations to provide direct services to the proposed project. In the project narrative, the applicant must:

- 1) indicate that it will maintain all project records, serve as the primary point of contact, and maintain funding accountability; and
- 2) explicitly state which activities will be conducted by the contracted entity.

4. Cost Share or Match

None.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Key Dates and Times

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| a. Application Start Date: | 01/09/2024 |
| b. Application Submission Deadline: | 03/20/2024 at 11:59:59 PM EDT |
| c. Anticipated Funding Selection Date: | No later than 06/07/2024 |
| d. Anticipated Award Date: | No later than 06/30/2024 |

2. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms and instructions are available at Grants.gov. To access these materials, go to <http://www.grants.gov>.

Applications will be processed through the Grants.gov portal.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant, unless they have a valid exception under 2 C.F.R. § 25.110, must:

- a. Be registered in SAM.gov before application submission.
- b. Provide a valid UEI in its application.
- c. Always maintain an active SAM registration with current information during the federal award process.

4. Steps Required to Obtain a UEI, Register in SAM.gov, and Submit an Application

To apply for a federal award under this funding opportunity, all applicants must:

- a. Apply for or verify their Employer ID Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service
- b. Have an account with <https://login.gov/>
- c. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and UEI and make sure the account is active.
- d. Create a Grants.gov account.
- e. Add a profile to a Grants.gov account.
- f. Establish an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) in Grants.gov.
- g. Submit application in Grants.gov.
- h. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information, including information on a recipient's immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well on all predecessors that have been awarded a federal contract or grant within the last 3 years, if applicable, at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

Applicants are advised that DHS may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when DHS is ready to make a federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before the federal award, DHS may

determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Further, following a federal award, a recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of the federal award. If a recipient's SAM registration expires during the federal award period of performance, DHS may take a remedy for noncompliance at 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, which could include terminating the federal award.

The Standard Language for Using Grants.gov to Apply is provided to aid in fulfilling these requirements (if applicable), based off of <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/grantors/grantor-standard-language.html>.

5. Electronic Delivery

DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. DHS encourages or requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov, depending on the funding opportunity.

For this funding opportunity, the USCG requires applicants to submit applications through Grants.gov.

6. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

General Instructions: Registering in Grants.gov is a multi-step process and the following provides instructions about how to register. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the necessary information before beginning the Grants.gov registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to make sure it does not impact an applicant's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organizations must have a UEI Number with an active SAM registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for a federal award under this funding opportunity.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but UEI SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an applicant should complete its registration in sufficient time to make sure it does not impact its ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

- a. **Obtain Employer Identification Number:** All entities applying for funding must provide an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The EIN can be obtained from the IRS by visiting: “Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) Online | Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov).”
- b. **Create a login.gov account:** Applicants must have a login.gov account to register with SAM or update their SAM registration. Applicants can create a login.gov account at the “Create Account” page. Applicants with existing SAM accounts can use the same email address for the login.gov account as with SAM.gov so that the two accounts can be linked. Refer to the Frequently Asked Questions page on SAM.gov for more information on the login.gov requirements for SAM registration.
- c. **Register with SAM:** All applicants applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent an applicant from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. Organizations will be issued a UEI number with the completed SAM registration.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html> or
<https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#t=Register%2FRegister.htm&callingApp=custom>.

Note: The regulation at 2 C.F.R. § 25.200 requires that, in maintaining an active SAM registration with current information, an applicant must provide information on the applicant’s immediate and highest-level owner, subsidiaries, and predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

- d. **Create a Grants.gov Account:** The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>.
- e. **Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:** A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant). If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant applications. Enter the UEI Number for the organization in the UEI field while adding a profile to add an Organization Applicant Profile to your Grants.gov account.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#t=Register%2FAddProfile.htm&callingApp=custom>.

- f. **EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:** After users register with Grants.gov and creates an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant’s request for

Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving users permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the applicant. Users will be able to apply online for an applicant any time after they have been assigned an AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#callingApp=custom&t=Applicants%2FManagement%2FManageOrganizationRoles.htm>.

For more detailed information about the EBiz POC login, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm?callingApp=custom#t=LoginAndMyAccount%2FEBizPOCLogin.htm&callingApp=custom>.

- g. Track Role Status:** To track a user's role request, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>.
- h. Electronic Signature:** When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the AOR's name who submitted the application on behalf of an applicant is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

7. How to Submit an Application to DHS via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. Users can create individual instances of a workspace for each NOFO.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. Complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities using Workspace can be found at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

- a. Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows users to complete it online and route it through an organization for review before submitting.
- b. Complete a Workspace:** Completing a workspace includes adding participants to the workspace to work on the application together, completing all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and checking for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of the application process users apply. Users may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.
- c. Adobe Reader:** If users decide not to apply for an applicant by filling out webforms, users can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The

individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to a local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

- d. **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** Users will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit an application.
- e. **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant's name, address, and UEI number. Applicants must complete the SF-424 information first to trigger this feature. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- f. **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting an application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
- g. **Track a Workspace Submission:** A Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application after successfully submitting a workspace application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Use the tracking number to access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

Additional training resources, including video tutorials, can be found at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>.

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. Contact the number listed in the application package for questions related to the specific grant opportunity.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist DHS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

8. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by **03/20/2024 at 11:59:59 PM EDT**. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time

stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. Users with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of the application. The AOR will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of timely submission. **Applications received by Grants.gov after the deadline will be considered late and will not be considered for funding.**

When DHS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application via email to the AOR who submitted the application.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives an application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission via email to the AOR attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some users end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

9. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. Format

Applications should be written in Times New Roman, 12 pt. black font, and one-inch margins.

b. Required Narratives with Page Limits

The following guidance and page limits apply to specific, required components of the application. Please follow the instructions carefully.

The USCG screens all application materials for compliance with the page limits, as well as the instructions provided in **Section D. 10. Other Submission Requirements**. The USCG will remove any text over the page limit and any document that is not specifically required by this NOFO. **Reviewers will not read, consider, or be provided with any text or document submitted beyond what is allowed.**

1) Executive Summary: Half page (appx. 250 words)

Applicants must include a **succinct** overview of the proposed project and activities. It should include what the applicant plans to accomplish, a summary of the proposed activities and deliverables, and a brief description of the potential, broader impact of the grant's successful completion.

Reviewers will not assess the summary against the selection criteria but use it as an introduction to the proposal. If the application is successful, the USCG will post the summary, pending any necessary revisions or updates, to its public website.

Applicants **should NOT** include:

- a) internal or technical jargon
- b) references to past grants or the strategic plan
- c) organizational information or prior history
- d) charts, graphs, or graphics.

2) **Organization Description: One page**

Applicants must provide a clear and concise description of the organization, including its knowledge, background, capacity, and technical experience to complete the proposed activities. If applicable, demonstrate the organization's previous experience with or working in RBS.

This one-page description should be the primary location for reviewers to review and assess your organization's ability to complete the proposed project. Please be sure to substantiate this experience vis-à-vis the resumes included elsewhere in this application and to cite this experience, as necessary but not to the point of redundancy, within the program narrative.

3) **Program Timeline: No more than two pages**

Applicants must submit a timeline that clearly explains the duration of the 15-month proposal. In lieu of writing the timeline in the program narrative, applicants should use the following table to itemize and explain each milestone of the proposed project and its related tasks. The timeline should provide a clear, chronological description that supports and coincides with the program narrative.

Applicants may use as many rows and as much text per row, as needed, to best describe the proposed activities. Applicants are encouraged to consider **Section E. 1. a. Programmatic Criteria** when drafting the timeline./

#	Task	Timeframe	Additional Information
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

4) **Program Narrative: Ten pages**

Applicants are encouraged to write their program narrative to address each of the published selection criteria in **Section E. 1. a. Programmatic Criteria**. Applicants should review the criteria beforehand and try to address each one in the order that they are listed.

Applicants should clearly articulate their goals, objectives, and proposed deliverables, and how these will be achieved. The narrative should demonstrate how the proposed activities address one or more of the initiatives of the strategic plan, and how the successful completion of the projects serves the greater public.

Applicants should also:

- a) use short and concise project titles
- b) clearly state at the beginning of the narrative which initiative(s) of the strategic plan it intends to address
- c) provide as much specificity as possible when describing key tasks, itemizing budget expenses, and explaining deliverables
- d) include cross-references to relevant information to avoid redundancies and to maximize page space.

Applicants should NOT include:

- a) their organization's name or the year in their project title
- b) technical jargon, short-hand, or abbreviations
- c) active hyperlinks to external resources that are not direct citations of a referenced source
- d) e.g., websites containing previous work, examples of online videos, etc.
 - i. providing "see more here" hyperlinks to external information does not align with the intention of a page limit
- e) citations that exceed the 10-page limit
 - i. if using footnotes or end notes, ensure that they are counted towards the overall page count

c. Required Narratives without Page Limits

1) Budget

Applicants must submit a separate, detailed, Excel-based budget using **Appendix C. Budget Template**. Applicants must download the Excel file separately from the funding opportunity in Grants.gov and follow the instructions in **Appendix B. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions**.

2) Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should describe, explain, and fully justify the requested amounts for the proposed items and/or activities identified in your budget. Descriptions may include job titles, roles and responsibilities, proposed travel, contracts, supplies, shipping costs, etc. It should not be used as an “extension” of the project narrative.

Applicants must follow the instructions in **Appendix B. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions**.

d. Other Required Documents:

- 1) 501 (c)(3) letter from the IRS designating the applicant’s nonprofit status
- 2) Verification of a federally approved accounting system
- 3) A copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
- 4) A Board of Directors roster that outlines duties, responsibilities, etc.
- 5) Resumes of principal participant(s), if applicable:
 - a) A principal participant is the primary individual(s) responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of the grant, and serves as the lead for the project.
- 6) Travel policy
 - a) Ensure that all travel requests and expenses are allowable and consistent with this policy.
- 7) Procurement policies
 - a) Include the procurement policies for your organization. Policies should be consistent with 2 C.F.R. § 200.317-200.327 Procurement Standards.

10. Other Submission Requirements

Organizations that do not follow these parameters may have their application(s) disqualified. We enforce these rules to ensure a fair and equitable competition for all applicants regardless of the type of project proposed.

- a. Applicants must apply for a **15-month** period of performance.
- b. Organizations can submit a **maximum of four** applications.
- c. The maximum budget request **per application** cannot exceed \$250,000.
Applications that exceed \$250,000 will not be reviewed.
- d. Do not submit any additional documents that are not explicitly requested in this NOFO. **These documents will not be provided to the reviewers.** This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1) bibliographies, footnotes, or end notes that extend beyond the 10-page narrative

- 2) contractual plans or proposals unless the procurement process is complete at the time of application
- 3) letters of support
- 4) examples of past work
- 5) presentation materials
- 6) survey data
- 7) course lists

e. Grants.gov PDF Submission Instructions

Please review and follow these instructions carefully. File name length can affect our ability to download your application from Grants.gov and to manage the documents on our internal servers. Standardized file names also allow us to better process your submissions for the application review process.

- 1) All required documents should be combined into two primary, but separate PDFs: ***Narratives*** and ***Additional Documents***.
 - a) If you do not have the ability to combine PDFs, label each file individually with a very simple description.
 - b) **DO NOT INCLUDE your organization's name, project title, or the year in the file names.**
- 2) The primary PDFs should be combined in the following order:
 - a) ***Narratives:***
 - i. Executive Summary
 - ii. Organization Description
 - iii. Timeline
 - iv. Project Narrative
 - v. Budget: Please follow the instructions in **Appendix B. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions** on how to save or print-to-PDF your Excel spreadsheet.
 - vi. Budget Narrative
 - b) ***Additional Documents***
 - i. 501 (c)(3) letter from the IRS
 - ii. Verification of a federally approved accounting system
 - iii. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
 - iv. Board of Directors roster
 - v. Resumes of principal participant(s)
 - vi. Travel policy
 - vii. Procurement policies

11. Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs

a. Program Allowable Costs

- 1) All expenditures under this program must be for allowable RBS costs.
- 2) The USCG permits costs related to outreach, marketing, and year-round safe boating campaigns. Specific approval of these activities will be given during the grant negotiation period for successful applications. Activities may include, but are not limited to, advertising, marketing, and/or outreach campaigns, public service announcements, educational videos, and other media.

b. General Requirements

All costs charged to federal awards (including both federal funding and any non-federal matching or cost sharing funds) must comply with applicable statutes, rules and regulations, policies, this NOFO, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. They must also comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 unless otherwise indicated in the NOFO or the terms and conditions of the federal award. This includes, among other requirements, that costs must be incurred, and products and services must be delivered within the budget period. 2 C.F.R. § 200.403(h).

c. General Funding Restrictions

Recipients may not use federal funds and any cost sharing or matching funds under federal awards for the following activities:

- 1) Matching or cost sharing requirements for other federal grants and cooperative agreements (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.306).
- 2) Lobbying or other prohibited activities under 18 U.S.C. § 1913 or 2 C.F.R. § 200.450.
- 3) Prosecuting claims against the federal government or any other government entity (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.435).

d. Prohibition on Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services

Recipients, subrecipients, and their contractors must comply with the prohibitions set forth in Section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, Pub. L. No. 115-232 (2018) (FY 2019 NDAA) and 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.216, 200.327, 200.471, and Appendix II to 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The FY 2019 NDAA and these regulations, as they apply to recipients, subrecipients, and their contractors and subcontractors, provide for two distinct prohibitions:

- 1) prevent the use of federal award funds to procure or obtain covered telecommunications equipment or services

- 2) prevent the use of federal award funds to contract with an entity that uses such covered telecommunications equipment or services.

e. Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs are those incurred prior to the effective date of the federal award directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the federal award and only with the written approval of the federal awarding agency. The USCG provides written approval of pre-award costs in its terms and conditions.

f. Indirect (Facilities and Administrative (F&A)) Costs

- 1) Indirect (facilities & administrative) costs (IDC) mean those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.
- 2) IDC are allowable by the recipient described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including 2 C.F.R. § 200.414. Applicants with a current negotiated IDC rate agreement who desire to charge indirect costs to a federal award must provide a copy of their IDC rate agreement with their applications.
- 3) Not all applicants are required to have a current negotiated IDC rate agreement.
- 4) Applicants who do not have a current negotiated IDC rate agreement (including a provisional rate) and wish to charge the de minimis rate must reach out to the USCG for further instructions.
- 5) As it relates to the IDC for subrecipients, a recipient must follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.332 and 200.414 in approving the IDC rate for subawards.

g. Evaluation Costs

Evaluation costs are allowable. Please see **Section F.6. Program Evaluation** for more information.

E. Application Review Information

1. Application Evaluation

a. Programmatic Criteria

This section includes the criteria that reviewers will use to assess each application. Applicants should draft the narrative in the order in which the questions appear to ensure each one is addressed.

Please remember that the program narrative cannot exceed 10 pages. Reviewers will not be given any text that exceeds the page limit. Also note that this section includes the points for each question, indicating its weight.

1) Does the applicant propose a project that addresses one of the three initiatives in the strategic plan?

- a) **If yes:** Does the applicant effectively demonstrate how its proposed project will address the initiative? **(20 pts)**
- b) **If no:** Does the applicant identify an area of need for the RBS community and effectively demonstrate an ability to complete the proposed project? **(20 pts)**

All applications are eligible to receive up to 20 points.

- i. *If yes: Applicants should clearly identify the targeted initiative and propose relevant activities.*
- ii. *If no: Applicants should clearly identify the need it plans to address and substantiate its importance, relevance, and potential contribution to the RBS community*

2) Does the applicant clearly define a project timeline and milestones? (10 pts)

*Applicants should demonstrate that the timeline for the proposed project is reasonable and that the milestones are achievable. Applicants should ensure that incremental goals and/or milestones are clearly planned and identified, as well as any projects that may be replicated during the period of performance (e.g., delivering multiple training sessions of the same course). It is important to show the progression of the project start to finish. Applicants should follow the instructions in **Section D. 9. b. 3. Program Timeline**.*

3) Are the proposed activities measurable and consistent with program requirements? (10 pts)

*Applicants that meet the performance measures specified in **Section A. 10. Performance Measures** should propose a methodology to effectively collect and report out on data collected through the grant process. Applicants that do not meet the measures should explain how their program can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively and demonstrate that these measures are both realistic and achievable.*

4) Does the applicant demonstrate knowledge and experience in RBS? (10 pts)

Applicants should clearly explain how the organization and its staff have the knowledge, experience, and background to operate an RBS program successfully. This information should be captured in the one-page Organization Description and substantiated vis-à-vis staff resumes and the program narrative.

5) Does the applicant have the organizational capacity and technical experience to complete the proposed project? (20 pts)

If the technical experience is not “in-house,” applicants should have a plan in place to acquire it and indicate the associated costs.

6) Does the applicant describe how the proposed project is, or will be, national-in-scope? (10 pts)

*Applicants should clearly explain how their proposed project qualifies as national-in-scope. Applicants should review the program-specific definitions of national-in-scope identified in **Section C. 2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria**.*

7) How effective are the applicant’s proposed methods of outreach and/or dissemination for its products and/or deliverables? (10 pts)

Applicants should indicate the associated costs.

8) Do the budget and budget narrative align with the proposed project? (10 pts)

Please ensure that the budget and budget narrative matches and/or is tailored to the proposed project, especially if your organization is submitting more than one application. Additionally, please use consistent terminology when describing items in the narrative, budget, and budget narrative, aligning the order in which they appear.

9) Are the budget line items necessary and/or reasonable? (10 pts)

*Reviewers will assess the necessity and cost reasonableness of each budget line. Use the budget narrative to describe, explain, and justify the associated costs of the project. Please see **Appendix B: Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions** for additional guidance.*

10) Are the proposed administrative costs reasonable? (10 pts)

Reviewers will assess if the costs associated with managing and executing the proposed activities are cost-effective as they relate to the deliverables. For example, reviewers will consider the level of effort to monitor a contract or create a deliverable against the amount of money paid to the person doing it. Reviewers will draw from their subject matter expertise to assess the proposed costs, and applicants should provide a clear explanation and justification for them in their budget narratives.

b. Financial Integrity Criteria

The USCG before making a federal award, is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3354 (enacted by the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-117, § 2 (2020)), 41 U.S.C. § 2313, and 2 C.F.R. § 200.206 to review information available through any (OMB-designated repositories of government wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, including whether SAM.gov identifies the applicant as being excluded from receiving federal awards. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

- 1) Financial stability.
- 2) Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
- 3) History of performance in managing federal award.
- 4) Reports and findings from audits.
- 5) Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

c. Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review

Prior to making a federal award where the anticipated total federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000):

- 1) The USCG is required by 41 U.S.C. § 2313 and 2 C.F.R. § 200.206(a)(2) to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM, which is currently the [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System](#) (FAPIIS) and is accessible through the [SAM.gov](#) website.
- 2) An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
- 3) The USCG will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.206.

2. Review and Selection Process

Applications are subjected to a Merit Review performed by Subject Matter Experts (reviewers). Reviewers assess the applications for technical merit, personnel qualifications, and the degree to which a proposal offers potential value and measurements to program goals as stated in this NOFO. Any persons who assess and score the nonprofit organization grant applications are required to complete a DHS Conflict of Interest Form.

Upon completion of the review, BSX-2 staff logs the scores and prepares a ranking list, along with the recommended funding levels from the reviewers, for discussion and consideration. All recommendations are presented to the BSX-2 Branch and

Division Chiefs for their review. The Office Chief then reviews and presents a recommendation to the Director of Inspections and Compliance for their review and ultimate approval. The Director of Inspections and Compliance has the authority to approve the awards. Once the Director of Inspections and Compliance determines the final funding levels, an approval memo is generated, co-signed, and kept as part of the official program file.

3. Clarification Period

During the application review and assessment process, reviewers will have a one-week period to ask applicants clarifying questions about the proposals. The Nonprofit Coordinator will notify the applicants in advance of the scheduled clarification period so that they can prepare accordingly. The Nonprofit Coordinator will serve as an intermediary between the applicants and the reviewers. Applicants must respond within a specific amount of time and can only provide responses directly to the question(s). The Nonprofit Coordinator will provide instructions to the applicants once the clarification period is scheduled.

F. Federal Award Information

1. Notice of Award

The AOR for the applicant should carefully read the federal award package before accepting the federal award. The federal award package includes instructions on administering the federal award and the terms and conditions of the federal award.

By submitting an application, applicants agree to comply with the prerequisites stated in this NOFO and the material terms and conditions of the federal award, should they receive an award.

All applicants will be notified of their funding status. Successful applicants will receive a letter indicating the funded proposal(s), award amount(s), and the assigned Grant Technical Managers (GTMs). The letter will also include important information regarding grant award negotiations and participation in the annual, mandatory webinar.

2. Grant Award Negotiations

After successful applicants receive their funding notifications, the assigned GTMs will work with recipients to identify areas of the executive summary, narratives, and/or budget that may require revision.

Revisions may be required if:

- 1) the applicant was not awarded the amount of funding for which they applied
- 2) there are activities and/or costs that are not allowable or approved
- 3) adjustments need to be made to the project timeline.

Pending the results of the negotiations, recipients must submit the appropriate revised documents to the USCG staff for review and approval. The USCG staff may provide guidance and/or stipulations that help inform the recipient's revisions. Staff will also draft a summary of their role(s) and responsibilities that define the USCG's substantial involvement in the management of the cooperative agreement. After review and mutual acceptance of the modified document(s), the award agreement and terms and conditions will be sent to the recipient for signature.

The assigned GTM and Grants Management Specialist will remain the recipient's primary points of contact for the duration of the project and should:

- 1) provide technical assistance as required
- 2) review and approve the recipient's progress reports and requests for payments
- 3) provide required federal forms and explain how to fill them out
- 4) act as liaison between the recipient and any other USCG staff.

3. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

a. DHS Standard Terms and Conditions

A recipient of a federal award under this funding opportunity will be required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions in effect at the time of the federal award. The DHS Standard Terms and Conditions are available online at [DHS Standard Terms and Conditions](#). The specific version of the DHS Standard Terms and Conditions applicable to the federal award will be clearly stated in the federal award package.

4. Reporting

a. Federal Financial Reporting (FFR) Requirements

- 1) Recipients must report obligations and expenditures through a federal financial report. The Federal Financial Report (FFR) form, also known as Standard Form 425 (SF-425), is available online at: [SF-425 OMB #4040-0014](#).
- 2) Recipients must submit the FFR *semi-annually* throughout the period of performance as detailed in the table below:

<i>Reporting Period</i>	<i>Report Due Date</i>
July 1 – December 31	January 30
January 1 – June 30	July 30

- 3) The final FFR is due within 120 calendar days after the end of the period of performance.

- 4) The USCG may withhold future federal awards and cash payments if the recipient does not submit timely financial reports or the financial reports submitted demonstrate lack of progress or provide insufficient detail.

b. Programmatic Performance Reporting Requirements

- 1) Recipients must submit a programmatic performance report *quarterly* throughout the period of performance as detailed in the table below:

<i>Reporting Period</i>	<i>Report Due Date</i>
July 1 – September 30	October 30
October 1 – December 31	January 30
January 1 – March 31	April 30
April 1 – June 30	July 30
July 1 – September 30	October 30

- 2) The report should be a one to two-page narrative summarizing key tasks, notable accomplishments, challenges, and/or adjustments made during the previous quarter.
- 3) Progress reports should not include future work plans or anticipated activities, activities that did not happen during the reporting period, or activities that were not funded by the grant.

c. Closeout Reporting Requirements

Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a federal award, recipients must submit the following:

- 1) The final request for payment, if applicable.
- 2) The final FFR.
- 3) The final progress report detailing all accomplishments, including a list of all deliverables.
- 4) A qualitative narrative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance.
- 5) Other documents required by this NOFO, terms and conditions of the federal award, or other DHS Component guidance.

After the USCG reviews and approves these reports, it will issue a closeout notice to close out the federal award. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds that will be de-obligated, and address the requirement of maintaining the federal award records for three years from the date of the final FFR, unless a longer period applies, such as due to an audit or

litigation, for equipment or real property used beyond the period of performance, or due to other circumstances outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.334.

In addition, pass-through entities are responsible for closing out those subawards as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.344; subrecipients are still required to submit closeout materials within 90 calendar days of the subaward period of performance end date. When a subrecipient completes all closeout requirements, pass-through entities must promptly complete all closeout actions in time for the recipient to submit all necessary documentation and information to USCG during the closeout of their prime award.

The recipient is responsible for returning any balances of unobligated or unliquidated funds that have been drawn down that are not authorized to be retained per 2 C.F.R. § 200.344(d).

d. Disclosing Information per 2 C.F.R. § 180.335

The regulation at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335 requires an applicant to notify the USCG before it enters the federal award if the applicant knows that it or any of the principals (as defined at 2 C.F.R. § 180.995) for the federal award:

- 1) Are presently excluded or disqualified;
- 2) Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it or any of the applicant's principals for one of those offenses within that time period;
- 3) Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a); or
- 4) Have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

The regulation at 2 C.F.R. § 180.350 requires a recipient, at any time after entering a federal award, to provide immediate notice to the USCG if the recipient learns that either it failed to earlier disclose information as required by 2 C.F.R. § 180.335 or, due to changed circumstances, the applicant or any of the principles for the federal award now meet the criteria at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335 listed above.

e. Single Audit Report

A recipient that expends \$750,000 or more during the recipient's fiscal year in federal awards (as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.1) must have a single audit conducted in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.514 except when it elects to have a

program-specific audit conducted in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.501. The audit must be conducted in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F and, as required by 2 C.F.R. § 200.514, in accordance with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards, which can be found on the [Yellow Book page of the GAO website](#).

5. Monitoring and Oversight

The regulation at 2 C.F.R. § 200.337 provides DHS and any of its authorized representatives with the right of access to any documents, papers, or other records of the recipient that are pertinent to a federal award in order to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts. The right also includes timely and reasonable access to the recipient's or subrecipient's personnel for the purpose of interview and discussion related to such documents. Pursuant to this right and per 2 C.F.R. § 200.329, DHS may conduct desk reviews and make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems to evaluate project accomplishments and to provide any required technical assistance. During site visits, DHS may review a recipient's or subrecipient's files pertinent to the federal award and interview and/or discuss these files with the recipient's or subrecipient's personnel. Recipients and subrecipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to DHS requests for information relating to a federal award.

6. Program Evaluation

Federal agencies are required to structure NOFOs that incorporate program evaluation activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting agency priority goal(s) and program outcomes.

[OMB Memorandum M-21-27](#), Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans, implementing Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-435 (2019) (Evidence Act), urges federal awarding agencies to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, improve equitable delivery, and elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency.” Evidence Act, § 101 (codified at 5 U.S.C. § 311).

As such, recipients and subrecipients are required to participate in a DHS Component, or PO-led evaluation if selected, which may be carried out by a third-party on behalf of the DHS, its component agencies, or the PO. Such an evaluation may involve information collections including but not limited to surveys, interviews, or discussions with individuals who benefit from the federal award program operating personnel, and award recipients, as specified in a DHS Component or PO-approved evaluation plan. More details about evaluation requirements may be provided in the federal award, if available at that time, or following the award as evaluation

requirements are finalized. Evaluation costs incurred during the period of performance are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect) in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.413. Recipients and subrecipients are also encouraged, but not required, to participate in any additional evaluations after the period of performance ends, although any costs incurred to participate in such evaluations are not allowable and may not be charged to the federal award.

G. DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information

1. Contact and Resource Information

Cynthia Dudzinski: cynthia.m.dudzinski@uscg.mil

H. Other Information

1. Period of Performance Extensions

Extensions to the period of performance under a federal award for the funding opportunity are allowed.

Recipients must request an extension in writing 10 days prior to the end of the period of performance. The USCG staff will review the request, as well as the award's agreed-upon deliverables, milestones, and timeline, to determine if the request is both appropriate and feasible. The USCG will notify the recipient via email and/or an official notification letter.

2. Program Income

Recipients are encouraged to earn income to defray program costs where appropriate. The USCG authorizes program income per the addition method as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.307 (e)(2). Program income must be used for allowable and approved grant activities, and it must be expended prior to the end of the project period. Recipients are encouraged to spend program income first before requesting additional grant funds.

3. SAM.gov Registration: Beware Third Party Scammers

There is **NO FEE** to register or maintain your SAM.gov registration.\

If you get an email, text, or phone call from a company asking you to contact them right away about your SAM.gov registration, be cautious. If you are asked to pay money to complete or renew your SAM.gov registration, be cautious. **These messages are not from the federal government.** It is **FREE TO REGISTER** in SAM.gov for any entity. You engage third party vendors at your own risk.

Please report these messages to the Federal Service Desk (FSD) at <https://fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do>. It will be reviewed by General Services Administration (GSA) staff.

4. Appendices

- a.** Grant Regional Map
- b.** Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions
- c.** Budget Template